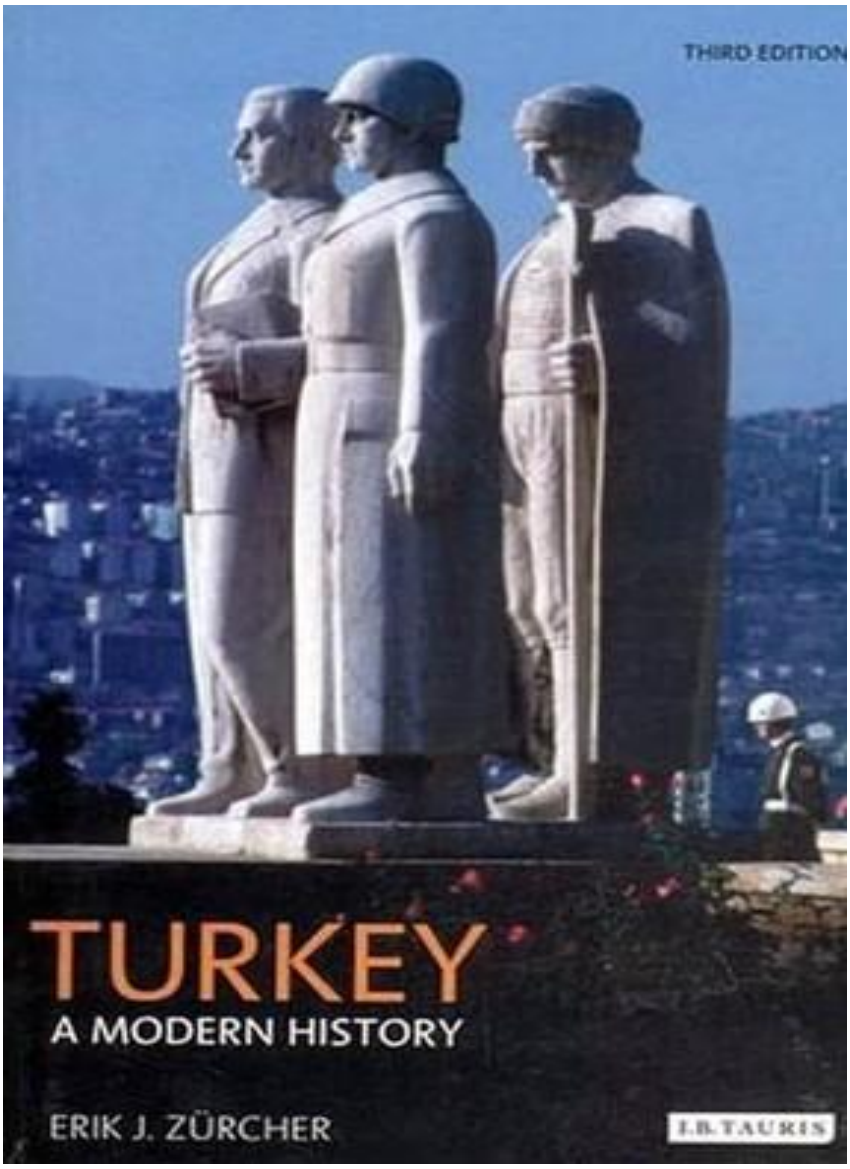
TURKEY A MODERN HISTORY- ERIK J. ZÜRCHER



INTRODUCTION: PERIODIZATION, THEORY, METHODOLOGY

Zürcher begins his book **Turkey, A Modern History**[1] with periodization clarification. For periodization, to be a valid instrument, it has to comply with two separate demands. First it must have explanatory value. Second, it should reflect actual developments of the period under investigation. Zürcher's book is divided into three parts. First part describes the emergence of modern Turkey in the 19th century. The second part of the book is dominated by Young Turk era. The years between 1908 and 1950 is encompassed in this section, because, politically, economically and in ideological terms there is a great deal of continuity. The third part deals with the period since 1950.

PART I

1.WESTERN INFLUENCES & ATTEMPTS AT MODERNIZATION

Empire at the End of the 18th Century

The Population of the Empire

Both in density and in the degree of urbanization, regional differences occurred. Around 1800, the Balkan provinces were the most-densely populated area. The Christian and Jewish groups had been incorporated into society by giving them *dhimmi* (protected) status. These communities enjoyed a measure of autonomy in the conduct of their own affairs.

The Ottoman System of Government

The ruling elite consisted of two categories: the representatives of the sultan's power and the guardians of the moral order. The ruling class called as askeri (military) were the servants of the sultan. The ulema ,the religious scholars used to keep the moral order and they also belonged to the ruling elite. The governmental system could be characterized as 'patrimonial'. Patron-client relations were existent. (patronage).

[1] E.J. Zürcher, Turkey A Modern History, I.B. Tauris, 2014.

One link between the elite and the masses was formed by orders of fraternities (tarikat). Another link was formed by the rich merchants and bankers of the towns.

The Sultan represented the absolute power. There was no concept of equality before the law.

The Economic Developments

War was an important source of income. The Ottoman economy was of pre-capitalist character and it was based on agriculture.

Empire in International Politics

Besides Austria, in the second half of the 18th century Russia emerged as the main threat.

2. BETWEEN TRADITION AND INNOVATION: SULTAN SELIM III

Nizam-ı Cedid (New Order) was in important reform programme aimed to empower the central state organization. Also a modern medical school and service were established. Selim for the first time, established permanent Ottoman embassies in London (1793).

The Fall of Selim III

Selim's policies had made him many enemies. He had alienated the military by his efforts to create a new army; moreover, the ulema disliked the French influence.

French Revolution and Its Impact Upon the Empire

Young ottomans serving at the embassies in Europe were deeply impressed by the effective bureaucracies they encountered there. Where the ideas of the revolution had a marked effect was among the literate members of the Christian communities of the empire. Greeks were firstly influenced thanks to their commercial connections with Europe. Liberty impressed them. Nationalism was introduced into the empire in the aftermath of the revolutionary wars.

Bayraktar Mustafa and Notables in Power

Sened-i İttifak (document of agreement) in 1808 was signed. Both the sultan and the notables promised to rule justly. This document was sometimes presented as an Ottoman Magna Carta or first attempt at constitutionalism. The influence of the ayan got obvious via this document.

3.THE EARLY YEARS OF SULTAN MAHMUT II

The most important territorial loss in this period was the province of Egypt. Mahmut II aimed to build a large, modern army, but income problem was on the agenda.

4. THE LATER YEARS OF MAHMUT II, REFORMS

Mahmut created new administrative and legal structures. In 1826 the janissaries were abolished. (Vaka-i Hayriye). To strengthen his hold on the provinces, the sultan also began the improvement of communications through the introduction of a postal system and new roads. Also first Ottoman newspaper was released.

Education

Modern schools were built. Tercüme Odası was established in 1833 in order to solve the communication problems in diplomatic contacts.

The Handicaps of the Reformers

First there was the lack of adequately trained personnel. In addition, the reforms lacked a mass popular support. Bureaucratic developments were not satisfying. Also old and new structures lived side by side producing some kind of dualism in jurisdiction and other areas. Also economic basis was quite weak for the reforms.

Economic Trends

1838 witnessed the sign of the treaty of Baltalimanı Trade Agreement. This opened the Ottoman market to British trade.

5. TANZIMAT ERA,1939-71

Political power shifted from the palace to the Porte-bureaucracy. Gülhane Edict promised four basic aims:

- The establishment of guarantees for the life and property of the subjects.
- An orderly system of taxation.
- A system of conscription for the Army.
- Equality before the law of all subjects whatever their religion.

The Tanzimat

The post-1839 covered the same areas as Mahmut II's programme: the army, the central bureaucracy, the provincial administration, taxation, education and communication.

Judicial Procedures and Secular Laws

In 1843, a new penal code was introduced underlining the equality of Muslims and non-Muslims. Secularization was also the most important trend in education in the Tanzimat era.

Opposition to the Reforms

The reform policies of the Tanzimat had never been based on popular demand. In 1859, Kuleli Vakası broke out as an attempt at coup d'etat that opposed reforms. Namık Kemal was an important figure. He was both a pious Muslim and an Ottoman patriot. The Young Ottomans were never tightly organized and their ideas differed greatly. They can be regarded as the first modern ideological movement among the Ottoman elites. They could influence public opinion.

6. THE CRISIS OF 1873-78 AND ITS AFTERMATH

In 1876 a constitution was established.

7. SULTAN ABDULHAMIT II ERA

The administrative centralization was achieved during this period. The communication was developed (telegraphs). Also new roads were established, besides this, improved technical means made the administration more efficient in taxation, army and keeping order. In this era, traditional and Islamic character of the reign has been underlined. Center of power again shifted to palace from bureaucracy. Abdulhamit II relied on internal espionage. Within the Army a sharp divide emerged between mektepli (from the school) and alaylı (from the ranks) officers. Hamidiye troops were built in order to fight against Armenian uprisings.

The Young Turk Movement

The first organized opposition group seems to have been established in the Military Medical School in 1889 when a group of students founded İttihad-i Osmani Cemiyeti. The leading figure there was Ahmet Rıza. He was a positivist. Mizancı Murat opposed him. Murat attached much importance to the caliphate. Sabahattin Ali was also a key figure, he was seen as the main threat against A. Rıza. He believed in the supremacy of the individual instead of the state.

PART II

THE YOUNG TURK ERA (1980-1950)

8. THE 2ND CONSTITUTIONAL PERIOD

This period brought freedom of thought and expression; widespread labor unrest was witnessed. Osmanlı Ahrar Fırkası was the main opposition against the CUP. In 1909, a counter-revolution broke out. An armed insurrection broke out in the name of restoration of Islam and Shariah. The Action Army suppressed the uprising.

In 1909, a number of articles in the constitution were changed, finally establishing a parliamentarian regime. The years between 1909-13 witnessed the first organized social activity in the empire. The elections carried out in 1912 were known as 'sopalı seçimler' because of violence that the CUP has employed to make sure of its majority. Halaskar Zabitan movement broke out as a reaction to these elections. They wanted the elections to be renewed.

Balkan War and the Bab-ı Coup

The loss of Edirne was used as a justification by the Unionists for 1913 coup. The CUP got complete control of internal politics afterwards. The regime that now developed had often been called the 'Triumvirate' of Enver, Cemal and Talat.

Reform Policies: Social & Cultural Change

One important development was the abolition of capitulations in 1914. Also further secularization of the judicial and educational systems were introduced. Position of women changed. They began to take part in social life. The Unionists even founded a Society for the Employment of Women. Some kind of decentralization was introduced aimed at winning over the Arabs. Participation in politics became much wider. Elitism declined in political sphere.

Finance and Economics

The Unionists approached the economic situation from a classically liberal point of view. Internally they sided with the capitalists. In 1909, the first realistic and modern budget was published. After 1913, CUP began to intervene more actively in the economy. The programme of the National Economy gained impetus after the triumph at Gallipoli.

Ideological Debates

After 1908, public debate has gained a new momentum. Three competing ideologies were on the political scene: Ottomanism, pan-ıslamism and pan-turkism. Also westernism existed too. Some extreme westernizers such as Abdullah Cevdet were in favor of adopting the ways of Europe totally. Namık Kemal by contrast, sought to answer the question of how to bring about

a synthesis of European elements with Muslim Ottoman civilization? Ottomanism was the official ideology of the 1908 revolution .

Yusuf Akçura was an important figure who wrote Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset. It compared relative merits of Islamist, Ottomanist and Turkist policies advocating the last. Ziya Gökalp was another important person. He made the most creative attempt at a synthesis of various elements of the Ottoman heritage with European style modernization. The leaders of CUP were not ideologues but men of action.

9. THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

The Armistice of Moudros had been signed after WWI. Article 7 of it was dangerous. It said that the Entente had the right to occupy any place if needed.

In 1920, a manifesto called the National Pact (Misak-ı Milli) was adopted. It consisted of 6 articles. (p.138-9).

In the towns of Anatolia, defence of rights organizations had been founded. It was announced that a national congress would be held in Sivas

The Independence War

The establishment of Independence Tribunals and the adoption of the High Treason Law (Hıyanet-ı vataniye kanunu) were important.

Political Developments

The first national assembly was quite a heterogeneous and unruly body. Second group was ideologically heterogeneous too.

The Peace Treaty of Lausanne

The problems discussed came under three headings: territorial and military; economic and about the position of minorities. The goals of the national pact were attained.

Turkey in 1923

Muslim population had increased. Linguistically two main groups were left: the Kurds and the Turks. Mortality and migration have affected the Ottoman demography.

10. 1923-27: THE EMERGENCE OF ONE-PARTY STATE

IN 1924, TpCF (Progressive Republican Party) was established by the leadership Hüseyin Rauf. This party had liberal motives.

On the other hand, the abolition of the caliphate removed an important religious symbol that bounded the two communities together. In 1925, Sheikh Sait rebellion broke out. Takrir-i

Sükun Kanunu (Law on the maintenance of order) was passed by the assembly. This law was used to suppress the Kurds.

Reforms and Executions

Kemalist reforms aimed to secularize and modernize the society.

11. 1925-45 ONE –PARTY STATE

In 1930 with Ataturk's motivations, a loyal opposition party (SCF) was established. In 12924 a new constitution was adopted. According to 1924 constitution, all power resided in the Great National assembly of Turkey. 1936 witnessed the congruency between the party and the state. In 1930, Menemen Incident broke out and martial law was declared.

The RPP's totalitarian tendencies

First and foremost among the social and cultural institutions to be suppressed was the Türk Ocakları. Türk Kadınlar Birliği was closed down too. The union of journalists was closed down. Both the press and the educational institutions were mobilized to spread the Kemalist message. In 1931, the basic principles of Kemalism were laid down in the party programme.

In 1937, six principles were incorporated into the Turkish constitution.

Reform policies 1925-35

Secularization of state, education and law was experienced. The Latin Alphabet was adopted. Turk Dil Kurumu was founded. Turkish history Thesis and Sun-language Theory was produced.

The most significant step in the secularization of social life was the suppression of the dervish orders (tarikats). In 1932 Turkish ezan replaced the Arabic one. Halk evleri and köy enst. were established to extend the reforms to the villages, to instill a secular and positivist attitude.

Economic Developments

In 1923 first economic congress was held in İzmir. At the 1931 RPP Congress statism was officially adopted as the new economic policy. In 1940, National Defence Law was enacted giving the government almost unlimited powers to fix prices even to impose forced labor.

On the other hand, there was a great deal of resentment against the war profiteers and the government reacted by introducing 'wealth tax' in 1942. The way this law was applied was scandalous.

12. TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY

The one-party regime had never been popular with the masses. On the other hand, the victory of democratic values in the 2nd WW paved the way for Turkey to adopt multi-party politics. In 1947 Truman doctrine was declared. Also Marshall aid was declared to help the war victim countries financially.

The Process of Democratization

In 1946, Memorandum of the Four (Dörtlü Takrir) occurred. Koraltan, Bayar, Köprülü and Menderes submitted a memorandum to the parliament. In 1946 DP was established. DP emphasized free enterprise. In 1950, the DP got a fascinating victory in the elections.

PART III
A TROUBLED DEMOCRACY

13. THE RULE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The DP saw itself as the representative of the popular will. However, after 1955, economic situation got bad. From then on, autocratic policies of the DP rule started. On the other hand, foreign relations were developed during this era. Regional alliances such as NATO were realized.

The DP and the Army

NATO exchange programmes led the young officers to recognize their counterparts and their opportunities. On the other hand, the autocratic policies of the DP continued. The establishment of the Fatherland Front to broaden the base of the party was unwelcomed by other parties. Also the investigation committees caused the reactions of other parties. On may 27 1960 the military elites intervened into politics through a coup.

14. THE 2ND REPUBLIC (1960-80)

The intelligentsia and the students welcomed the coup. The military announced that power was now in the hands of the National Unity Committee (MBK). The role of the professors (the architects of the 1961 constitution) made the coup become a revolution. The MBK

consisted of 38 officers. There moderates and radicals in it. Türkeş was one of the leading radicals. Then the 14 radical members were eliminated from the MBK.

The 1961 constitution institutionalized the political role of the military (NSC). It was more liberal than the old one; it tolerated a wider spectrum of political activity than before.

Demirel in power

The JP won a landslide victory in the elections in 1965.JP was a coalition of industrialists, small traders, artisans, large landowners, liberals and religious people. It had very little ideological coherence.

Political Radicalism

The 1960s were years of rapid change. Student population grew. Social mobilization increased. Also political variation increased.

1971 Memorandum

Political violence and social uprisings threatened the order of the country. Weak coalitions could not produce any solutions for the existent problems. On 12 March 1971, the Army declared an ultimatum. It demanded a strong, credible government that would end anarchy.

Political polarization

The struggle between left and right dominated the political scene. High levels of inflation led to social discontent.

15. THE THIRD REPUBLIC: TURKEY SINCE 1980

After the military intervention in 1980, all political parties and two trade confederations MISK and DISK were suspended. All public discussion of political matters was prohibited. In 1982, a new constitution was adopted. It concentrated power in the hands of the executive and increased the power of the president. It also limited the freedom of the press and trade unions.

After 1983 elections, Ozal became prime minister. Motherland Party was a coalition of ideological currents (Islamist, nationalist and social-democrat).

Liberalization

Under Özal rule, a slow process of democratization and liberalization was witnessed. He was determined to re-establish the primacy of civilian politics over the military. Import substitution left its place to export-oriented industrialization.

The Hearts of the Enlightened

Aydınlar Ocağı was founded in 1970. Its ideologue was İ. Kafesoğlu. According to Turkish-Islamic Synthesis, Turkish culture was built on two pillars: a 2500-year old Turkish element and a 1000 year old Islamic element.

The Islamists Take Control

In the municipal elections of 1994, the Welfare party got a big success. The secularist circles got in a state of panic. The elections of December 1995 confirmed the trends that had surfaced in 1994.

28 February 1997

Both "civil" society organizations and the army as well as the intelligentsia reacted against the Welfare government. Then the government had to resign. The new government's main task obviously was to implement the reforms demanded by the military elites. The WP was closed down. The reformist wing established AKP in 2001.

The Return of the Islamists

In 2002 elections the AKP won a victory. In 1999, official candidacy for the EU had been got. Turkey has concentrated on meeting the Copenhagen criteria.

EPILOGUE

Especially since 2002, Turkey has had a considerable amount of democratization and liberalization thanks to the EU membership process. In addition, the role of the military in politics had eroded and civil society has got stronger too.